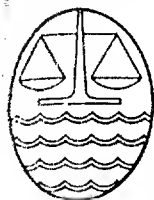




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LETTER DATED 7 FEBRUARY 1975 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY
ADDRESSED TO THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE
THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of a note dated 6 February 1975 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey addressed to the Embassy of the Republic of Greece in Ankara regarding the Greek Government's proposal to take the dispute in the Aegean Sea to the International Court of Justice at The Hague.

It has been the consistent belief of the Turkish Government that disputes in areas with special characteristics, such as semi-enclosed and enclosed seas, should as a matter of principle be resolved by mutual agreement of the States of the area. It is with the conviction that this search by the two Governments for a settlement in the Aegean Sea constitutes an example in support of the above-mentioned principle that Turkey has responded to the proposal by Greece. Turkey furthermore hopes that the Conference on the Law of the Sea will take due note of this development when considering the norms to be applied in areas with special characteristics.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the Conference on the Law of the Sea.

Accept, etc.

(Signed) Osman OLCAY
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

75-03599

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Note dated 6 February 1975 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of Turkey addressed to the Embassy of the Republic of Greece
in Ankara

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs presents its compliments to the Embassy of Greece and, with reference to their note of 27 January 1975 No. 6242.4/53/AS.293 regarding the delimitation of the continental shelf in the Aegean Sea, has the honour to set forth the view of the Turkish Government for transmission to the attention of the Greek Government here below:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcomes the spirit of conciliation of Greece regarding its proposal to settle the dispute on the delimitation of the Aegean continental shelf through peaceful means.

It is the considered view of the Turkish Government that various vital questions concerning the Aegean Sea are still outstanding between Greece and Turkey which should be resolved through peaceful means. As Turkey and Greece are compelled to be friendly and co-operative by virtue of geography and mutual interests, there seems to be no other alternative but to settle their disputes through negotiation.

Animated with this spirit, and in view of the special geographic structure of the Aegean Sea, wherein both countries are confronted with the issues to be settled yet, inter alia the breadth of the territorial seas in the Aegean and the use of its space, the Turkish Government hopes that the Government of Greece shall agree with priority to enter into negotiations with the Government of the Republic of Turkey on the question of the Aegean continental shelf with a view to arriving at a mutually acceptable and satisfactory solution.

Indeed, Turkey had proposed on various occasions the initiation of negotiations between the two countries with the aim of solving the difference on the Aegean continental shelf peacefully, in a just and equitable manner. It should be noted regretfully that these Turkish proposals were not met by Greece and negotiations were thus prevented. There is no doubt that meaningful negotiations constitute a basic method for the settlement of international disputes. In view of the fact that such negotiations have not yet taken place, the issues relating to the disputes have neither been fully identified nor elucidated.

However, in principle the Turkish Government favourably considers the Greek Government's proposal to refer the dispute over the delimitation of the Aegean continental shelf jointly to the International Court of Justice. To this effect and to elaborate the terms under which the matter shall be referred to the said Court, Turkey proposes high-level talks to be initiated between the two Governments. The Turkish Government is of the opinion that these talks be held at ministerial level.